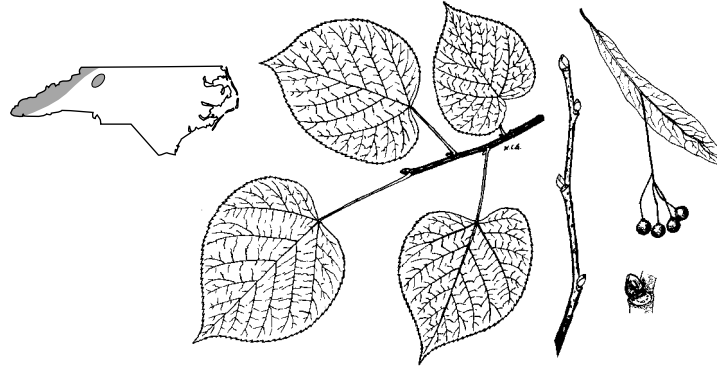


## American Basswood (*Tilia americana* L.)



The American basswood also is known as American linden, white-wood, linn or beetree. The basswood grows chiefly in the mountains, where it is a common and valuable timber tree. It reaches heights of 70 to 80 feet or more and diameters of 2 to 3 feet. American basswood grows best in coves or bottomland sites where the soils are deep, moist and fertile, but it often is found on rocky slopes.

The **bark** on young trees ranges from green to grayish green, later breaking up into narrow ridges. The twigs are green to red and grow in a zigzag fashion.

The **leaves** are heart-shaped, uneven at the base, 3 to 6 inches long, thin and saw-toothed. The surfaces range from smooth on top and bottom to densely hairy on the lower surface.

American basswood **flowers** are yellowish-white and hang in drooping clusters that open in early summer. The flower stem is attached to the middle of a long, narrow, leaf-like bract. The flowers are very fragrant and bees use them to make choice-grade honey.

The **fruits** are hard and rounded, and they are about the size of a pea. They hang suspended in clusters from a stalk that is attached to a paper-thin, strap-shaped bract. Each fruit contains two seeds and is covered with a thick, reddish-brown fuzz. It remains attached in clusters to the leafy bract, which later acts as wing when it is carried away by the wind.

The light cream colored **wood** is lightweight, soft, tough but not durable. American basswood is used in the manufacture of pulp, woodenware, furniture, trunk frames, and many other products.



**Carolina basswood** grows rarely on well-drained soils in the Piedmont and southern Coastal Plain. Its **leaves** are somewhat smaller than those of American basswood, and they are densely covered with grayish or brownish hairs.